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LOUISVILLE, KY.
TIMES

E-172,934

JAN 16 1967

STATINTL

Viet Views May Ally CIA and Critic Fulbright

Chicago Daily News Service

CPYRGHT

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) may become the unwitting ally of its foremost Senate critic in his renewed attack on U.S. policy in Vietnam.

Sen. J. William Fulbright, D-Ark., who as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee has had few kind words for the spy agency, apparently has gained access to its highly critical analysis of the bombing of North Vietnam.

The CIA report may thus become Fulbright's chief weapon in his committee's exploration of Vietnam policy. The committee was to hear Secretary of State Dean Rusk testify today.

After much bitter protest over his exclusion, Fulbright was admitted informally last week to the Senate's watchdog subcommittee on the CIA.

Accordingly, he was present when CIA Director Richard Helms briefed the subcommittee on Vietnam in its first meeting of the year last Monday.

What the CIA does or does not tell Congress is one of the spy agency's best-kept secrets. But with all the furor over the bombing of North Vietnam, it is almost inconceivable that Helms was not required to testify on that issue.

The CIA's views on the bombing are scarcely a secret any more. Sen. Richard B. Russell, D-Ga., chairman of the subcommittee on the CIA, inadvertently exposed the CIA attitude last week.

He said classified reports indicate much of the bombing has been "wholly ineffective" and the "most expensive" any country has ever conducted.

Russell, a leading "hawk" on Vietnam, suggested the air raids be replaced or supplemented by naval bombardment.

But Fulbright, a leading "dove," presumably will press Rusk and other administration witnesses for a complete halt of the attacks on North Vietnam.

Fulbright has expressed agreement with United Nations Secretary-General Thant that no peace negotiations are possible until the bombing stops. in order to test the Russian contention that such a course would lead to negotiations.

Elsewhere there were these other comments or developments on the war:

looked down the road far enough to chart the course where we're going when the hostilities are finally over."

✓ Michigan Gov. George Romney, a possible contender for the 1968 Republican presidential nomination, suggested privately after a meeting with Henry Cabot Lodge, U.S. ambassador to South Vietnam, that the administration may be placing too much emphasis on bombing as a means of cutting the flow of supplies from the North into the South.

✓ Lodge briefed Pope Paul VI today on the United States' Vietnam policies, in what Vatican sources termed a "very cordial" 4-minute audience.

✓ Assistant Senate Democratic Leader Russell B. Long of Louisiana said the United States should "bear down" harder to win the war, even at the risk of war with Red China or the Soviet Union.